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A Survey of Beginner's Language Teaching in UK Classics Departments: Latin

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A Survey of Beginner's Language Teaching in UK Classics Departments:

Latin

This article presents the results of a survey on *ab initio* classical language teaching in universities carried out by Mair Lloyd and James Robson in 2013-14. It covers Latin provision in UK Classics departments and complements its sister [report on Ancient Greek](#), also published in this edition of CUCD bulletin.

As with the Greek survey, we were delighted with the number of responses we received, with representatives from 27 UK Classics departments kindly giving their time to answer a substantial set of questions. Topics ranged from the aims and objectives of beginner's courses, to class sizes, pass rates, teaching hours, and the different kinds of assessment techniques used. By conducting the survey, we were also keen to capture instructors' approaches to teaching and learning, to find out what textbooks they were using and - a particular interest of ours - to explore attitudes towards new technology.

Our work builds on a similar survey of Classics departments undertaken by Nick Lowe in 1995 (who, in stark contrast with us, published his results in characteristically efficient manner that same year: [CUCD Bulletin 24](#), pp. 30-62). Indeed, the topics covered by the 2013 survey remain largely the same as those explored in 1995, even if the precise questions and the manner in which we present our findings occasionally differ. Our warm thanks go to Nick for his help and encouragement for our reboot - just as our warm apologies go to anyone who has been patiently waiting since 2014 for our results to see the light of day.

What has changed since 1995? Well, some shifts are relatively subtle, such a slight increase in contact teaching hours (up from an average of 3.4 in 1995 to 3.68 in 2013: see Section 5) and a slight decrease in the amount of linguistic material that students were asked to cover in a year (Section 11). There are also some interesting data about the textbooks used for teaching. And so while *Reading Latin* still retains its dominant position (up from nine users reported in 1995 to ten in 2013), there has been a significant increase in the popularity of Wheelock (up from two users to eight). But what is perhaps most remarkable is the sheer diversity of textbooks now being used in universities (see Section 11). A further significant change is, of course, the integration of technology into teaching in courses - although respondents also reported that not all language instructors embrace its use with equal enthusiasm (Section 13).

Note the sections below use the same headings and numbering as the Ancient Greek survey, which allows for direct comparison of responses, charts and statistics.

1. Reasons for studying Latin and the aims of *ab initio* courses

Q: *In your personal opinion, what is the single most important reason why a student on a Classics or Classics-related degree course should study Latin?*

This was an open question from which the following themes and representative responses emerged. The largest number (seven) emphasized the importance to students of gaining direct access to ancient texts (and of appreciating their literary and stylistic qualities). Comments included:

To be able to access the sources in the original languages.
To be able to access and understand texts from antiquity, even if with the help of a dictionary and translation.
The direct engagement with the original sources lies at the foundation of classical studies and cannot be replaced by any other mediated form.

Five others stressed the role of language acquisition in allowing students to enter the thought world of the Romans.

The study of an ancient language gives students the means to gain a better appreciation of ancient texts and culture.
To be able to access at first hand the thoughts, beliefs, ideas, worries and aspirations of another culture. To understand the history and culture better, through an examination of the language that produced the texts they will study during their degree.
To fall in love with the languages, the materials to which they give access, and the workings of language itself, and thereby to train and weaponise the cognitive superpowers unlocked by the study of non-living languages of very great depth and richness.

Another five emphasized the independence of judgement that students are able to bring to their studies through knowledge of the language.

Authentic and independent access to texts and sources.
In order to be able to read Latin literature in the original (if that isn't a tautology).
It allows them direct access to the classical texts that form the bulk of our source material for antiquity, enriching their studies more generally and improving their critical independence.

Some identified the pleasure and intrinsic interest of the study of Latin, while others mentioned its value as preparation for work.

The enjoyment of engaging with the actual words and language of our authors.

Excellent intellectual training.

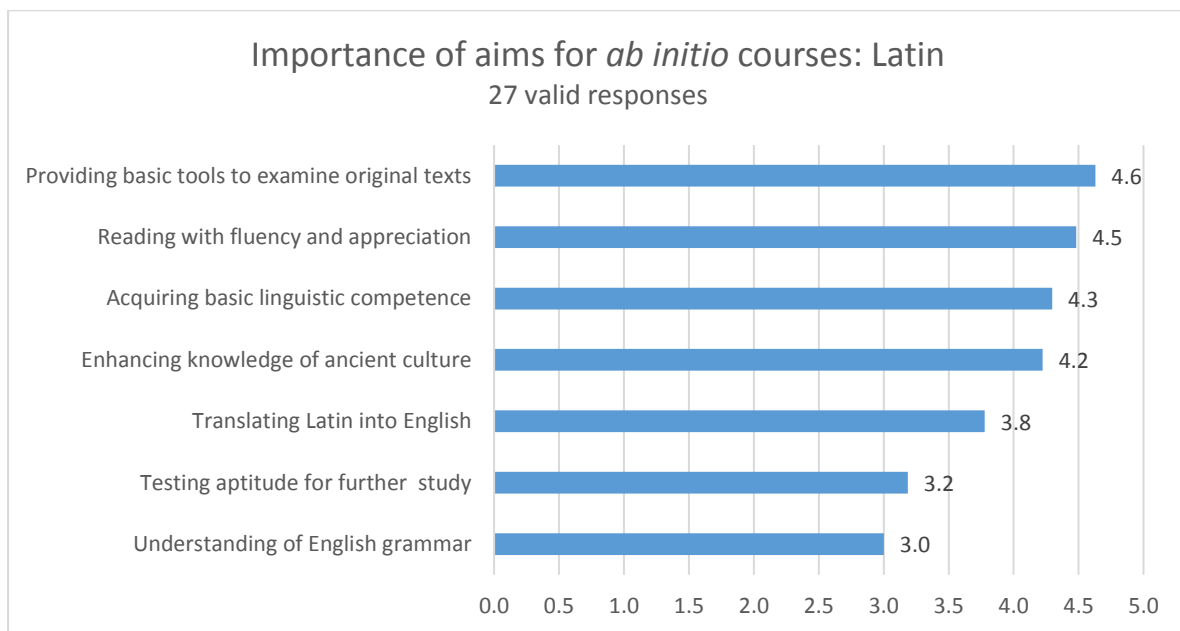
... the analytic and logical skills acquired while learning an ancient language are recognized and appreciated in several working environments.

It depends on the person's interests. For aspiring academics it's a job requirement. For others it's a matter of personal interest, as far as I'm concerned.

Finally, one respondent emphasised the value for students of learning about languages and improving their command of English.

The study of ancient languages not only introduces students to languages that are invaluable for the study of antiquity, but also to languages that equip them with a clear understanding of the way in which languages work in general, and this consequently improves their understanding and use of English.

Q: What is the level of importance of the following aims for the *ab initio* module(s) in Latin in your university?



This multiple choice question asked respondents to score the importance of each suggested aim from 0 ('totally irrelevant') to 5 ('extremely important'). Scores for each aim were averaged to rank the aims in order of perceived importance as shown in the chart above.

When given the option to state further important aims, respondents replied:

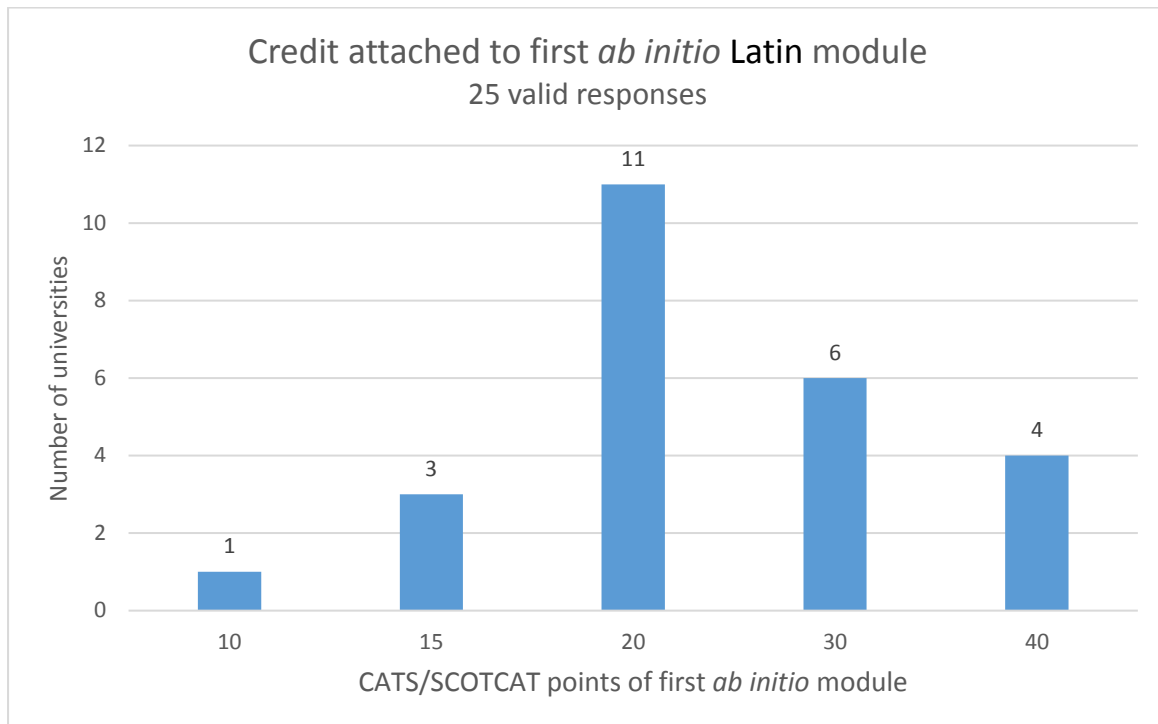
- To enable non-classics PG students to gain the skills they need for their research, e.g. in medieval history, music, English, etc.
- To provide skills and terminology helpful in learning modern languages at some subsequent stage.
- Latin ... helps students develop the ability to absorb and retain large quantities of information with systematic learning strategies and enhanced memory skills.
- To enable students to continue studying the language for three years and then to use it as a teacher.
- To enable students to appreciate why Google-translated Latin tattoos are a really bad idea.

2. Is there a single *ab initio* module or more?

Eleven institutions reported that they ran more than one *ab initio* module. Eight of these ran separate *ab initio* modules for undergraduate and MA students. In addition, one of the eight ran two different undergraduate modules, one for those starting Latin in the first year, and another for those starting Latin in year 3 or 4. One university taught undergraduate and MA students the same *ab initio* module but supplemented MA work with study of an ancient text. Another had first years and years 2 and 3 studying the same module, but with those in years 2 and 3 doing extra coursework. One university provided a separate module specifically for students of Ancient History alongside their standard Latin module.

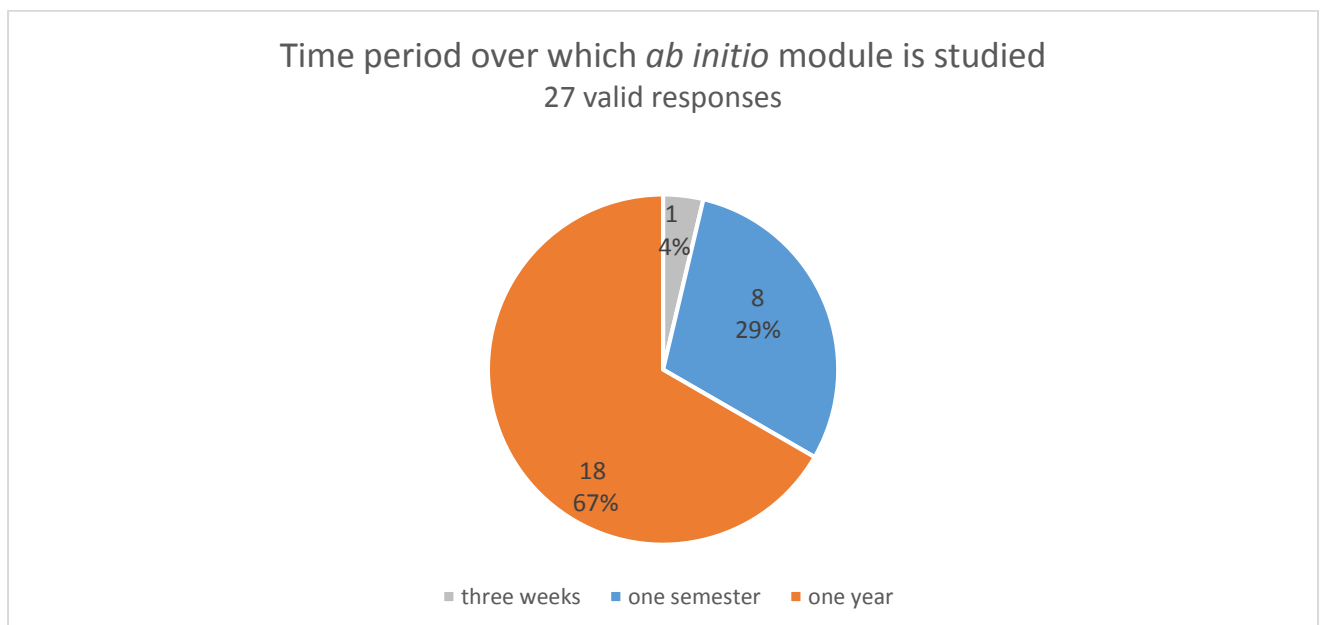
3. CATS/SCOTCAT points per *ab initio* module

Q: How many credit points (CATS/SCOTCAT points) does the *ab initio* Latin module carry?



NB This charts captures the credit attached to the *first* beginner's module studied by students. A large number of institutions offer two sequential modules for beginners spread over a single academic year, but here we record the points awarded for the first module only.

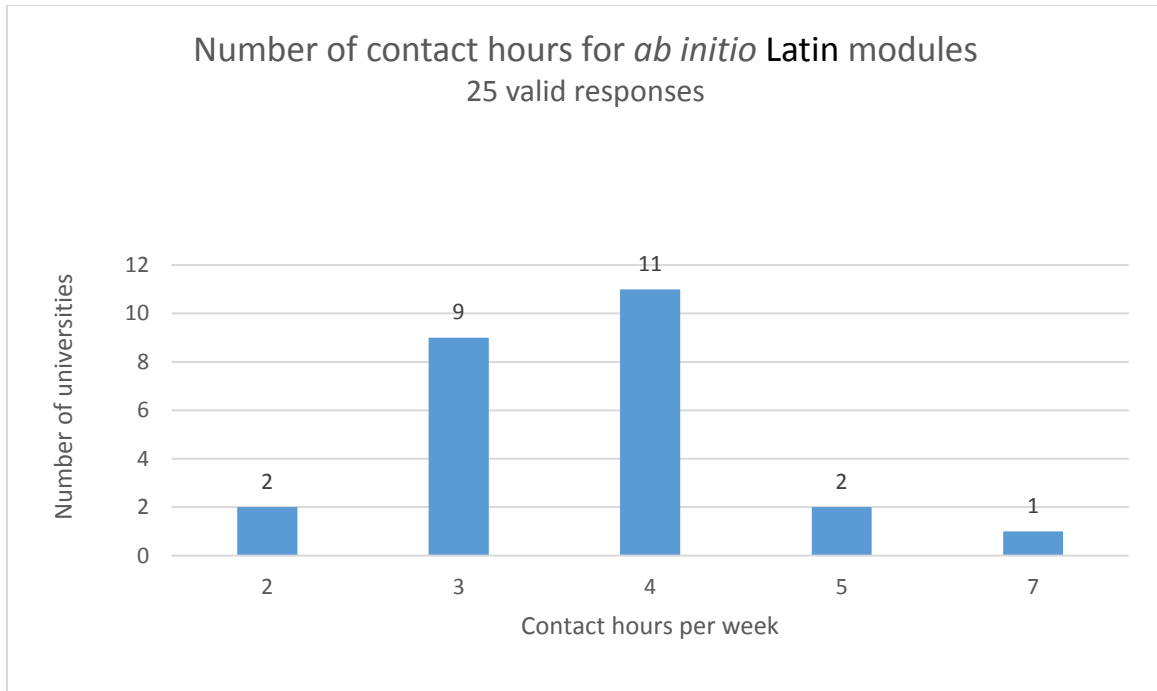
4. Time period over which beginner's modules are studied



5. Contact hours per week

Q: How many contact hours are there per week for the *ab initio* module(s) offered?

Standard teaching models



Where universities described more than one teaching model, the most standard undergraduate course was selected (e.g. not fast-track, etc.).

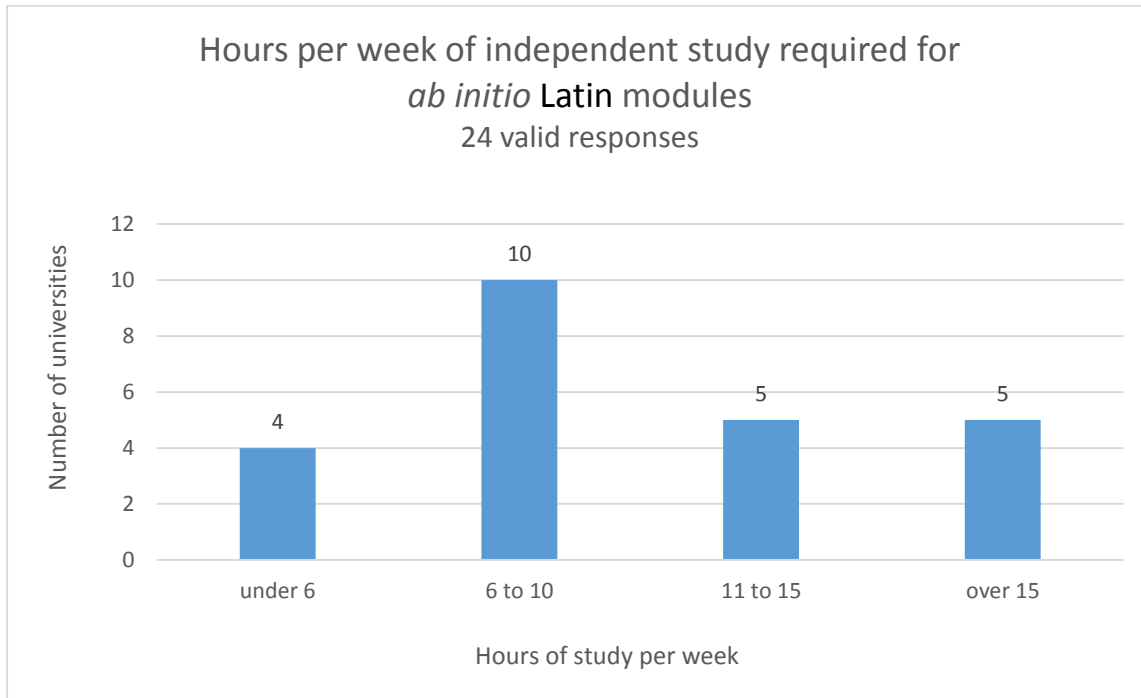
An average number of contact hours for standard modules was 3.68; this compares with an average of 3.4 reported in the 1995 survey.

Non-standard teaching models

Two universities recorded unusual delivery modes. One provided an intensive course with 12 hours per week over three weeks, while another provided approximately 12 tutorial hours over the year.

6. Hours of private study required

Q: In addition to contact hours, roughly how many hours per week of private study are students expected to do for the *ab initio* module?



The intensive *ab initio* module run over three weeks is not included in this chart but was recorded as requiring approximately 55 hours of study per week.

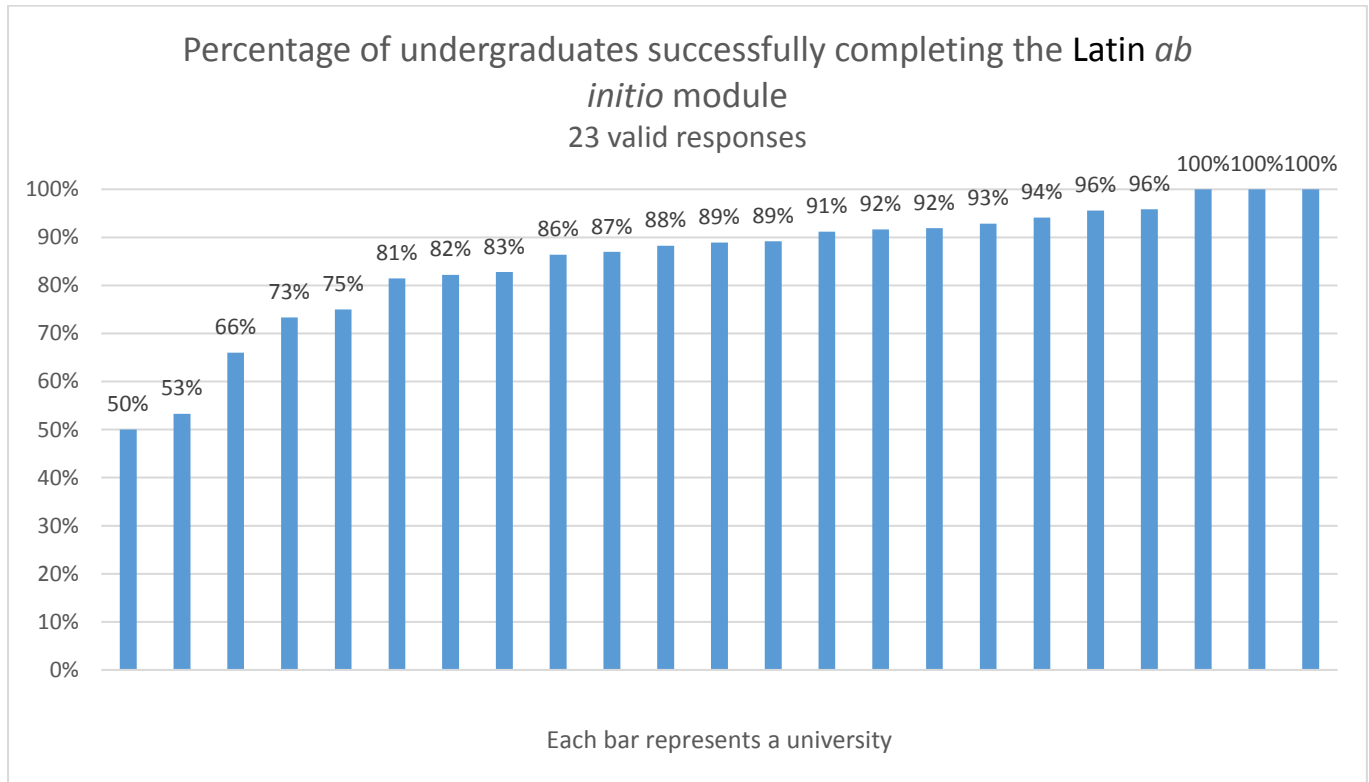
7. Student enrolments and pass rates

Enrolments

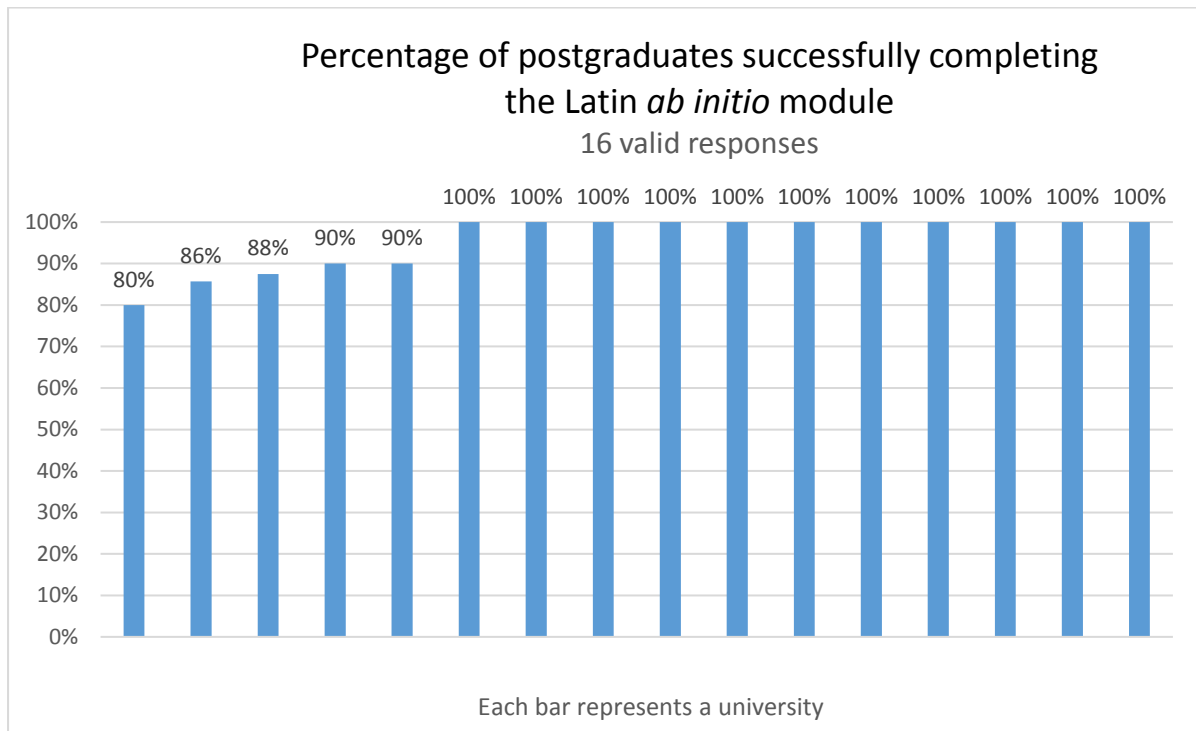
According to CUCD statistics, 1,100 undergraduates and 165 postgraduates were enrolled on Beginner's Latin modules in 2012-13. The following tables, based on data reported by our respondents, covers 1,044 undergraduates and 123 postgraduates. Some of this difference in totals is due to the fact that of the 27 universities surveyed, only 23 universities provided valid responses for undergraduate pass rates and 14 for postgraduate rates (two of these universities had no postgraduate students).

Pass rates

Undergraduate pass rates varied from 50% to 100% (the latter reported in three institutions). The overall undergraduate pass rate across all 23 valid responses was 77%.

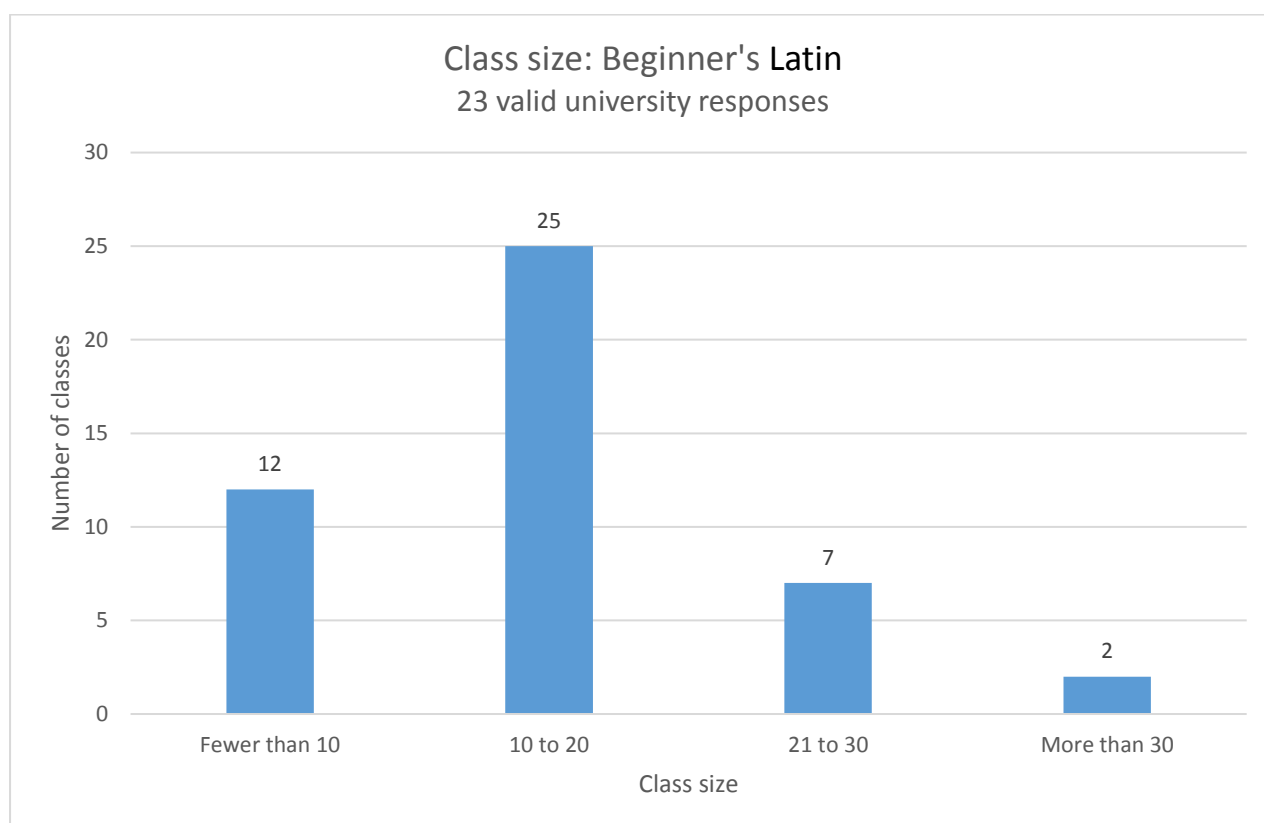


Postgraduate pass rates varied from 80% to 100% (the latter reported in 11 institutions). The overall postgraduate pass rate was 92%.



8. Class sizes

While most institutions reported teaching beginners as a single group, some ran more than one module whereas others split the cohort up for some (or all) of their teaching. The following graph represents the group size in 46 classes taught in 23 institutions.



9. Material covered and credits gained

Q: Please indicate the level which ab initio students are expected to reach by the end of their first year of study (this may comprise more than one module) and the number of credits which they gain.

Respondents answered this question in a variety of ways, some referencing the course book used (e.g. *Reading Latin*, *Wheelock*), while others chose to measure progress through rough equivalence to GCSE or A Level study. Helpfully, many respondents whose institutions offer both preliminary and follow-on beginner's modules over the course of a single year provided data for both modules.

As can be seen from the individual responses listed under each heading, there are notable differences in the quantity of material that students using *Reading Latin* were expected to cover per unit of credit, with some students gaining just 20 credits for reaching the end of Section 4, while others gained 40 credits for reaching Section 4A (NB credit is conceived of here in terms of CATS/SCOTCAT points rather than ECTS).

Reading Latin

20 credits: end of Section 3D

20 credits: end of Section 4

30 credits: 'half way through the book'

30 credits: end of Section 4A plus grammar from sections 4B and 4C

30 credits: end of Section 4

40 credits: Section 4A

40 credits: end of Section 4

40 credits: end of Section 5F

Wheelock

30 credits: Chapter 40 (end of book)

40 credits: Chapter 40 (end of book)

40 credits: Chapter 40 (end of book) plus reading of passages from *Loci Antiqui*

Keller and Russell, *Learn to Read Latin*

30 credits: Chapter 8

40 credits: Chapter 11 with excerpts from 12-15

Shelmerdine, *Introduction to Latin*

40 credits: end of Chapter 32

Oxford Latin Course

20 credits: Parts 1 and 2

So You Really Want to Learn Latin

40 credits: end of Chapter 2, Book 2

Powell, *Veni Vidi Vince!*

40 credits: end of Unit 23

Approximate GCSE/A Level Equivalents

30 credits: GCSE standard

30 credits: GCSE standard

30 credits: GCSE standard

40 credits: A level standard

40 credits: A level standard

Points not known: A level standard

Points not applicable: A level standard

Other

10 credits: 'basic present and past tenses, first three declensions; familiarity with epigraphic source types'

30 credits: 'completion of course book [not stated] covering morphology and grammar up to subjunctive clauses'

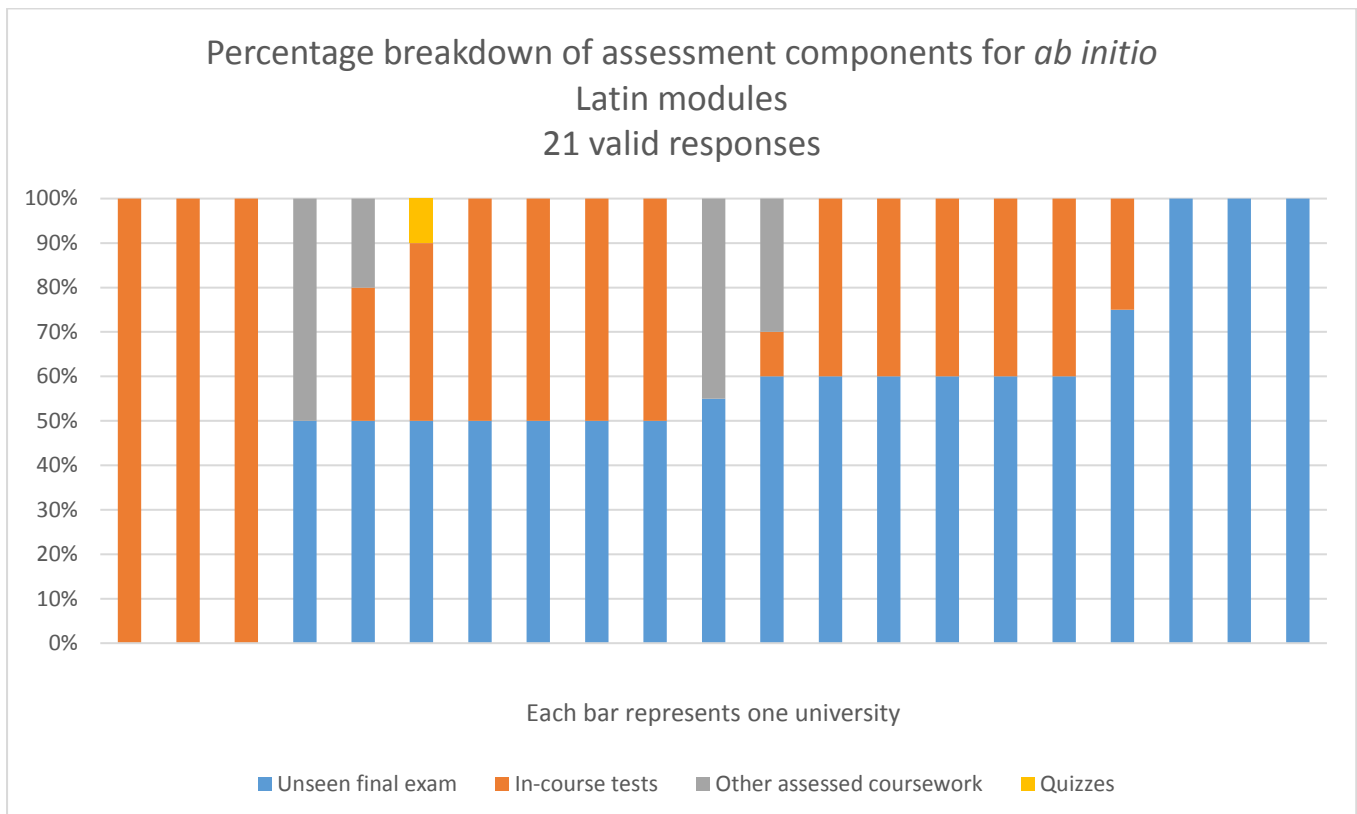
40 credits: 'able to read texts sufficiently to be able to go on to second year'

In the 1995 survey, the median point of *Reading Latin* reached by *ab initio* students was 4D over the course of a year, with the least ambitious course reaching 4A and the most ambitious finishing the whole book (credits not specified). Of the two users of Wheelock in 1995, one finished the book while the other moved to handouts once the basic grammar had been covered.

10. Assessment methods

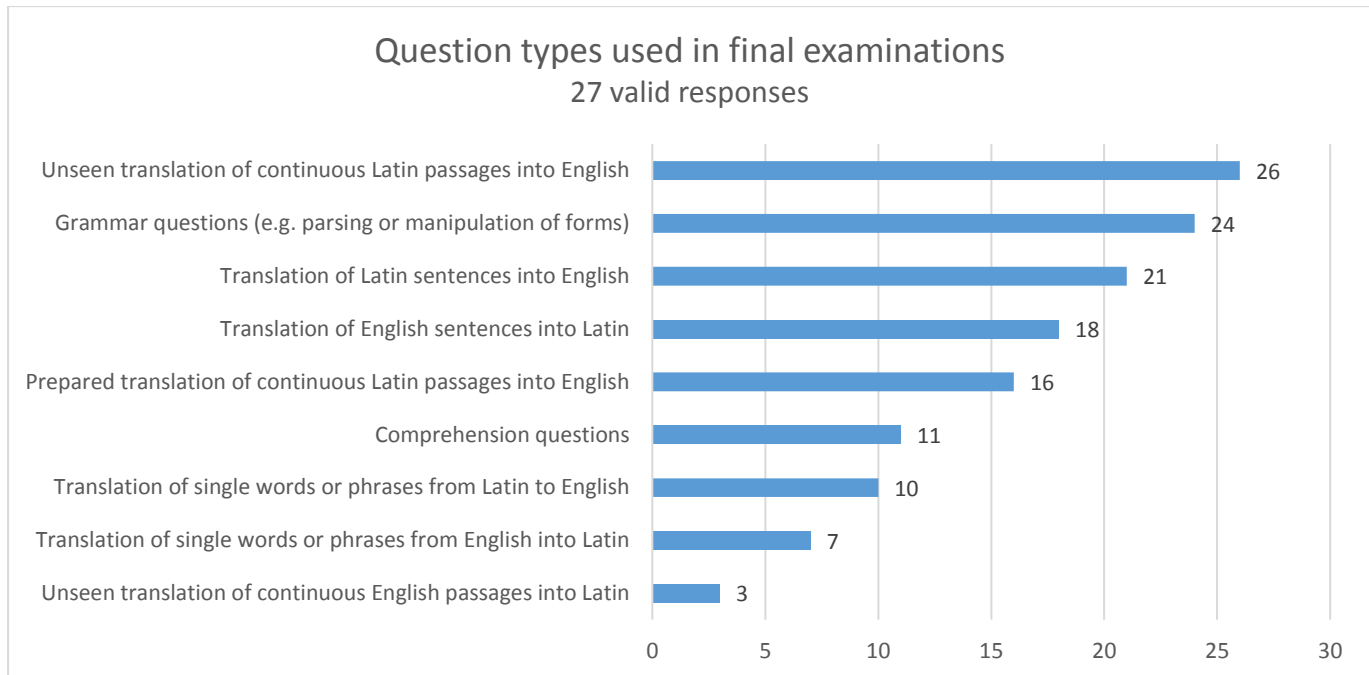
Of the 20 respondents completing the 1995 survey, 16 reported that their *ab initio* Latin module was assessed (at least in part) by a final examination, whereas 9 reported using in-course tests and 5 other coursework. As the chart below shows, in 2013-14 the majority of modules involved a mix of assessment methods with only three courses assessed entirely through a final examination.

Q: What proportion of the total marks for the module does each assessment component carry?



The most standard undergraduate module described by each university was selected for inclusion in this chart.

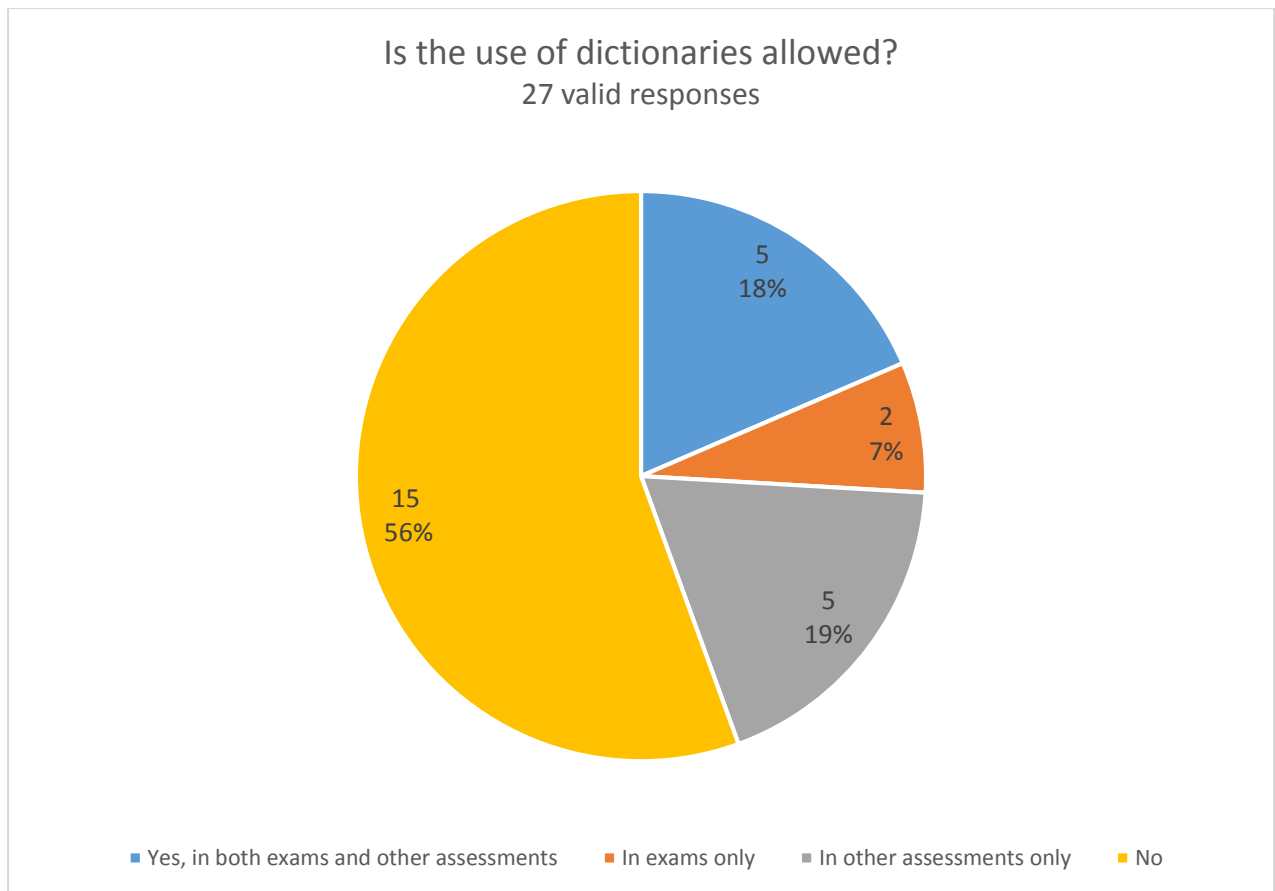
Q: What types of question or exercise do you use in the final exam for the ab initio Latin modules?



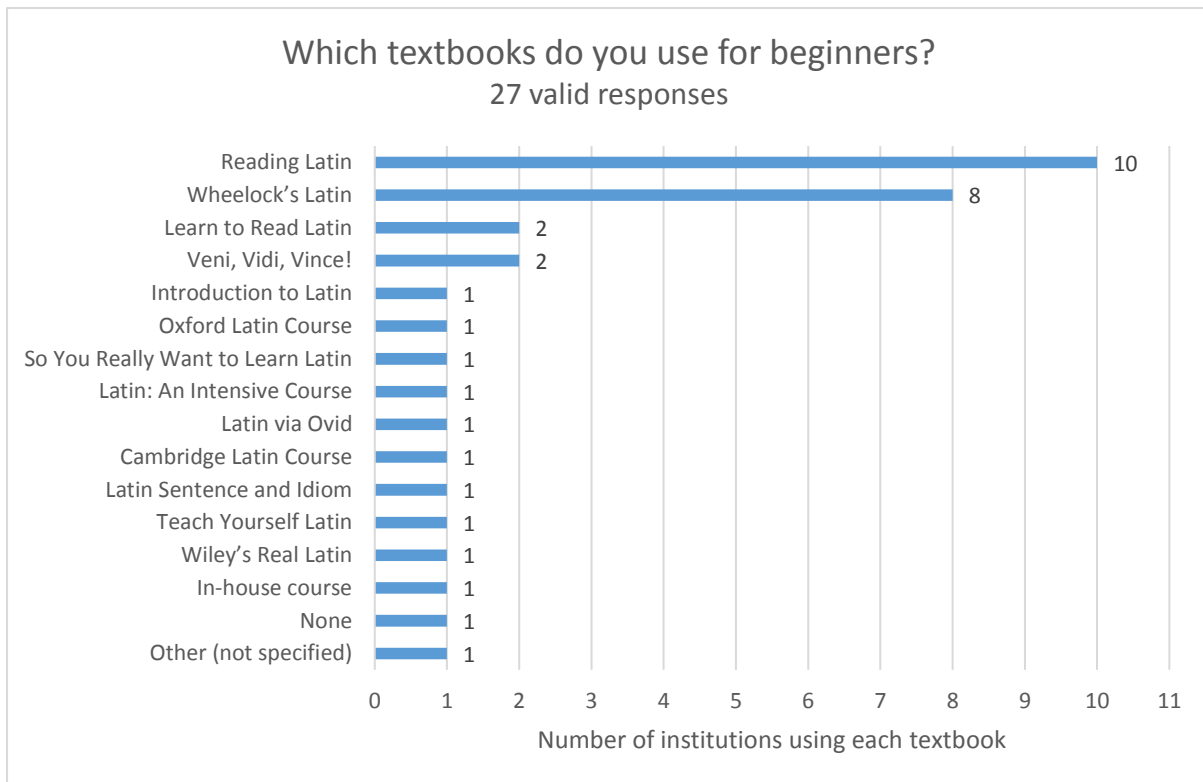
Other question types listed comprised:

- giving English words derived from Latin words
- declension; conjugation; principal parts of verbs
- gapfill involving the provision of a suitable form of a given Latin word
- gapfill sentences (where students are provided with a sentence in Latin with a word missing and an English translation of the sentence)
- multiple choice (e.g. identify an ablative form or a superlative adjective from a list of three words)
- practical criticism of a passage from a prepared text

Q: Is the use of dictionaries allowed in exams or other assessments for ab initio module(s)?



11. Course books



Out of 27 respondents, six reported using more than one textbook. Three of these were using *Reading Latin* and three Wheelock alongside other textbooks. Indeed, of the course books named in the chart above, six were being used *only* in combination with other texts, i.e. not as the exclusive textbook in an institution, namely: *Latin: An Intensive Course*, *Latin via Ovid*, *CLC*, *Latin Sentence and Idiom*, *Teach Yourself Latin* and *Wiley's Real Latin*.

The use of *Reading Latin* (a revised, second edition of which was published in 2016) held fairly steady between 1995 and 2012: in the 1995 survey, 9 of the 20 respondents reported teaching from it, compared to 10 out of 27 in 2012 (although it might also be noted that two respondents said that they were in the process of switching from *Reading Latin* to another textbook). The main gains were made by Wheelock, which saw a huge increase in popularity: there were eight reported users in 2012, up from just two in 1996. In terms of losses, *Teach Yourself Latin* was down from two users to just one (in an institution where it was used alongside both Wheelock and *Wiley's Real Latin*), and the once relatively popular *Learning Latin* by Randall and Cairns went from three to zero users. Perhaps most striking is the sheer range of textbooks that are now used in universities: some of these are recent arrivals on the scene, while others are more established, including 'schools' courses such as OLC and CLC. Interestingly, in the free text comments, more than one respondent expressed exasperation with the current resources available for teaching Latin at university level:

I am far from satisfied with any of the textbooks available.

We use *RL* because there is nothing better for adults (which is really sad).

Perceived strengths and weaknesses of textbooks

Instructors were asked to list what they saw as the pros and cons of the textbooks they used.

Jones and Sidwell, *Reading Latin*

Strengths:

- good range of exercises and additional material (i.e. ‘real’ Latin and ‘Deliciae Latinae’ sections)
- amount of material means it can be used in both years 1 and 2 of student study
- good pace
- designed for self-study
- introduction of the deponent before the passive
- well-designed

Weaknesses:

- too much material and too long for the UK academic year
- grammatical explanations can be dry and unnecessarily complicated
- grammar is introduced in an odd order (e.g. deponents before passives) with no clear scheme; key grammar is delayed (e.g. ablative absolute; imperfect)
- inclusion of uncommon and/or alternative grammatical forms confuses students
- Plautine passages in the first sections unpopular and do not always make sense to students
- too much reliance on running vocabulary for the translation new passages
- lack of a clear, user-friendly reference grammar
- passages often difficult
- odd pagination and cramped lay out
- odd learning vocabulary: uncommon words often chosen over common words
- exercises can be dry

Wheelock’s Latin

Strengths:

- gets the job done of covering the basics in one year to allow students to move on to reading texts
- pace: condensed presentation of material suits the time restraints of university teaching
- good, detailed coverage of the necessary grammar

- good online support
- students like the layout of the text
- all the material is contained in a single volume
- passages for translation work well with adults
- course works well for Postgraduates

Weaknesses:

- non-British case order (a common complaint)
- book unwieldy and unattractive for beginners
- order in which grammar is introduced is not always ideal
- grammatical terminology occasionally confusing
- speed at which material must be covered leaves students struggling with vocabulary acquisition
- has a 'bitty' feel in its Latin sentences and choice of continuous passages
- translation exercises not always well focused on the grammar or forms covered in the particular chapter
- answers can be easily found and cribbed online

Keller and Russell Keller, *Learn to Read Latin*

Strengths:

- thorough grammatical explanations
- plenty of exercises
- provides an intense grounding in Latin morphology and syntax which gets students to a stage where they can read Latin relatively quickly

Weaknesses:

- unnecessarily expensive
- leaden sentences ('Cicero would weep')
- only 'real' Latin is read: students do not therefore get to read Latin until well into the second half of the course
- little sign of pedagogical method in the design or interrelationships of exercises

Powell, *Veni, Vidi, Vince!* (unpublished; free pdf available online)

Strengths:

- targeted specifically at adults/university beginners
- full, clear, linguistically informed explanations of grammar
- excellent integration of exercises
- covers essential material in two terms
- actively teaches dictionary skills
- flexible enough to support a wide range of individual teaching styles

- free to students in print, online, and offline editions
- exercises also available in self-marking versions online
- ‘unorthodox but effective’ order in which grammar is introduced
- course has a clear ‘personality’, including interesting observations on Latin and English grammar
- ‘by a huge margin the best *ab initio* course I’ve ever used’

Weaknesses:

- vocabulary learning optional: even able students therefore use dictionary as a crutch
- needs to be used with a single published dictionary, but none of the candidates is ideal
- late introduction of tenses other than present
- in-text exercises unevenly distributed and thin on ground in later units
- rapid pace of course
- students progressing to Intermediate feel undertrained in working with continuous prose
- lack of full set of tables or corresponding reference grammar

Shelmerdine, *Introduction to Latin*

Strengths:

- material presented in such a way that all grammar and syntax can be covered in two semesters
- good proportion of ‘real’ Latin passages which provide good practice in reading

Weaknesses:

- Latin often feels artificial
- lack of exercises

Balme and Morwood, *Oxford Latin Course*

Strengths:

- students enjoy it
- teaches the basics quickly
- emphasis on nouns (in Part I) and verbs (in Part II) provides a good focus

Weaknesses:

- not designed for University use
- contains much material that needs to be skipped over

Oulton, *So You Really Want to Learn Latin*

Strengths:

- clear
- grammatically sound for university level
- good value and easy to bring to class

Weaknesses:

- too few texts, so instructors must create their own
- grammatical explanations ‘a bit one-dimensional’

Goldman and Nyenhuis, *Latin via Ovid*

Strengths:

- covers required grammar at a suitable pace
- engaging stories

Weaknesses:

- grammar not always adequately explained
- vocabulary limited to mythological subject matter

Maltby and Belcher, *Wiley’s Real Latin*

Strengths:

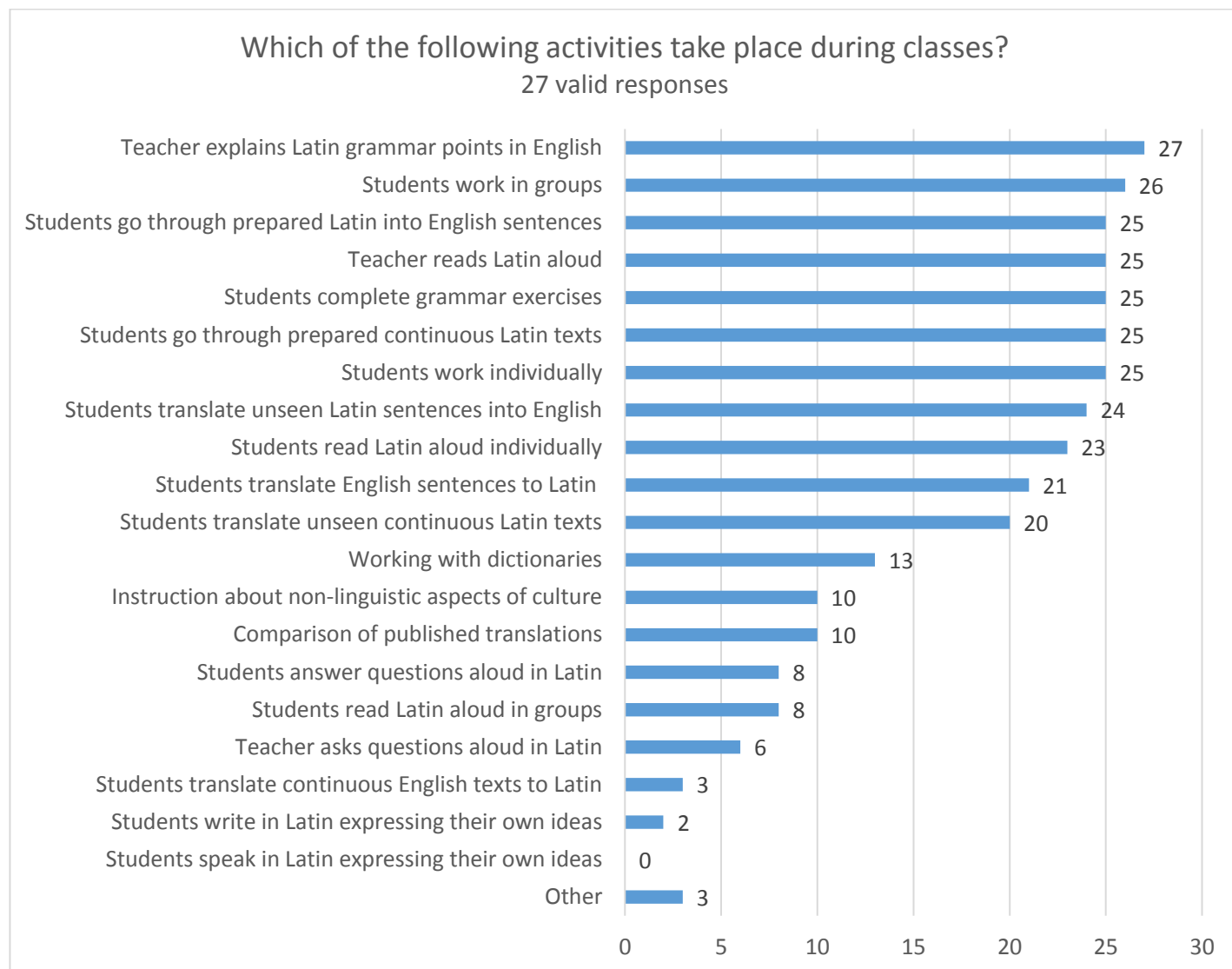
- uses ‘real’ Latin examples from ancient authors (e.g. Cicero, Caesar, Livy and Ovid)
- includes translation sentence from English into Latin

Weakness:

- fast pace is often challenging for students

12. Teaching and learning methods

Study inside class



Other activities mentioned comprised:

- etymologies
- discussion of literary points and practical criticism
- chanting of noun/verb paradigms
- discussion of styles/effectiveness of learning
- pair work, involving the explanation of grammatical points to a partner

One respondent commented:

I usually put up model answers on-line for them to check their work in advance, so we can focus on problem areas and discuss.

Q: Please describe what you perceive as the strengths and weaknesses (if any) of the most useful activity or activities undertaken in class.

In the free-text comments about the strengths and weaknesses of these activities, respondents made points about a broad range of issues, as the following sample shows.

Grammar Explanations

Interactive explanation of grammar [is important] as students often have never been taught any grammar in any form at all, neither at school nor at university.

Reading/Translating Prepared Passages

Best to practise reading and translation when students have time to prepare. Otherwise they look up words the whole time and do not get the overall picture.

Going over translation of prepared work orally can lead to students switching off.

Reading/Translating Unseen Passages

Doing unseen translations in class is important, since it provides practice for the students in advance of the exam.

Working through unseen passages from Cicero or Ovid as a group - students find this rewarding and appreciate that they are gradually acquiring the skills to translate the works of ancient authors.

Reading original Latin texts together: can be really hard for some students especially early on. But is a really challenging exercise and gets straight to what we want them to do.

Translating into Latin

Translating into Latin: great for backing up grammar points etc. and can be good for word order, but also quite limiting especially if only sentences.

We ... are strongly committed to encouraging active knowledge of the language. Although the students do complain about translation into Latin, we are deaf to their complaints! I mean, we really do believe that it is the most efficient way to learn.

To my mind, translating into Latin is the most effective way of familiarising students with the language. It reduced fear, helps with memorising forms and endings, and with understanding the structures of the language.

The principal aim is to enable students to read Latin and to translate accurately and effectively. However, English-Latin exercises are the ones which reveal the strength and depth of a student's learning!

Translation from English into Latin is not done only because of time constraints: given the limited time at disposal, it is probably better to focus on Latin into English.

Exercises

Unglamorous but vital: going through prepared exercises live rapidly establishes what students need help with, with the downside that students who are coping well will feel (rightly) that class time is determined by the needs of the weakest.

Doing grammar exercises and sentences in class under close supervision enables teacher to monitor progress and give individual assistance where necessary.

Variety

Variety is crucial for maintaining interest and engagement.

I certainly think that it is worthwhile breaking up the lecture, which is when I go through explaining the new grammar. I stop on about three occasions in the 50 min for the students to do some of the exercises from *Reading Latin* which relate exactly to the point I've been talking to. I go around the class helping them and, if at all possible, I have other tutors also going around helping students.

I swap regularly between activities to make sure students remain engaged. I think they all have some merit.

Too much talk from the front of the class ... leads to switch off.

Interaction with Students

Large Semester 1 class ... is difficult for engaging with individual members. Smaller tutorial groups of about 12 better. Semester 2 class which has shrunk allows for more interaction with members of class.

Interaction is at all times important - to reinforce, to check on learning, to allow students to express problems.

Group Work

Group or pair work is important for peer support and morale.

Working in groups works well - students can offer support to one another.

... collaborative work helps them to see that translation isn't an exact science.

Focusing on What Students Can Do

I take the opportunity to supplement what *RL* does and to try and make Latin seem more straightforward, by getting students to think about what they do know rather than what they don't.

Focus on Assignments/Exams

I generally provide exercises on key grammar that students have met, preview what they will soon meet, give them study tips and give a steer on what to focus on (and what they don't need to focus on) for the next assignment and final exam. ... So, I guess I define 'useful' as what will get them through and what makes them focus on the kind of task they will be assessed on (which may seem very instrumental, but hey!).

Reading Latin Aloud

Students reading aloud Latin individually is vital for improving their awareness of morphology.

Dictionary Skills

Dictionary skills are crucial, but students should start working with dictionaries in the second term.

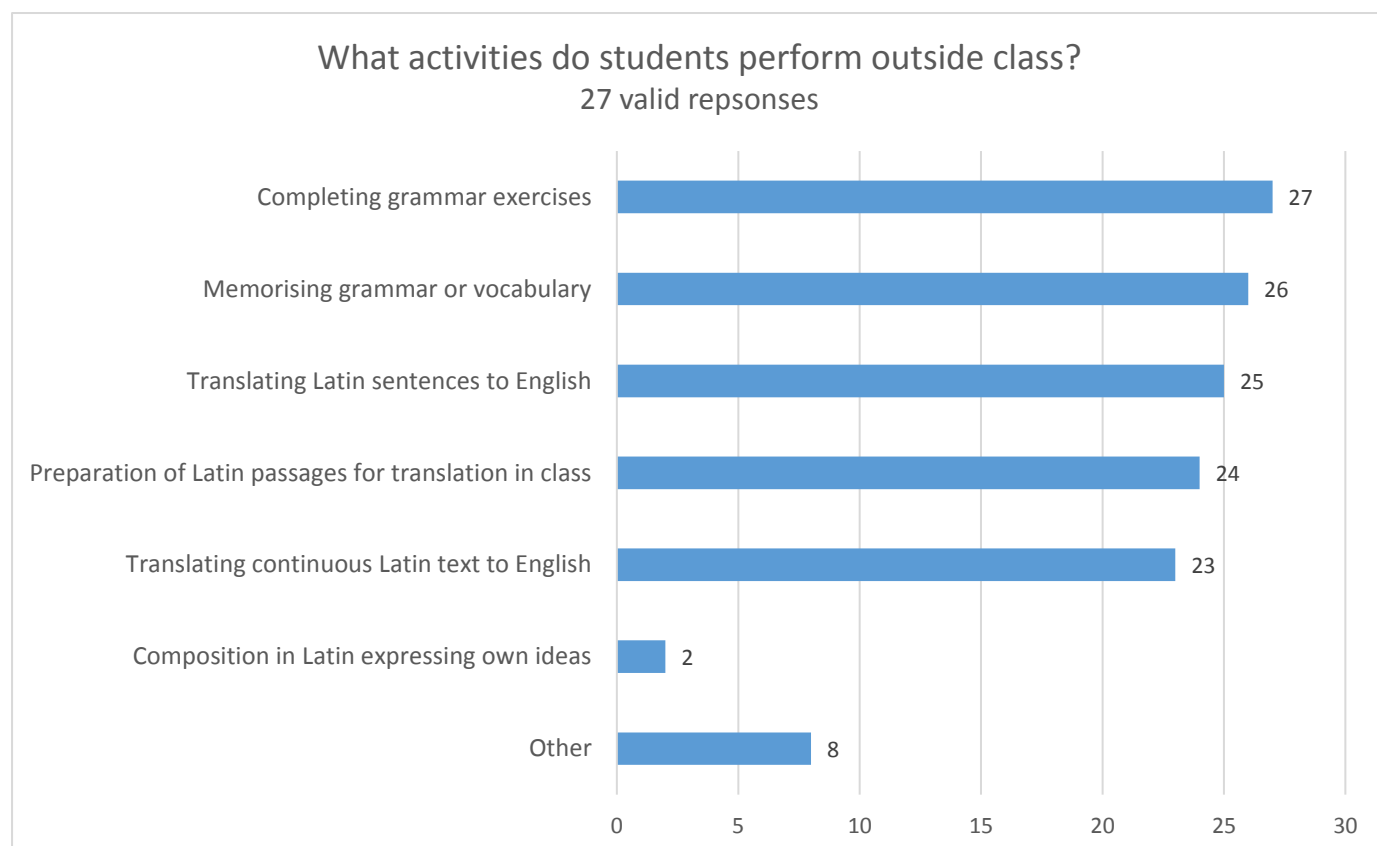
Including Cultural Context

Explanation of culture and mind-set that is linked to a language [is important] and offering cultural content in connection with translated text.

Shortage of Time

There is never enough time! Both teachers and students feel this acutely. Those of us who are older must constantly remind ourselves of how long we had to imbibe the knowledge we demand of our students.

Study outside class



Other activities reported comprised five responses of 'Translating English into Latin', and one each of 'Working on online Latin tests', 'Using online resources' and 'Preparing *Latin in Action* exercises with questions on text with parallel translations'.

Q: Please describe what you perceive as the strengths and weaknesses (if any) of the most useful activity or activities undertaken outside class time.

Memorising

The most useful activity is rote learning - probably a most unfashionable thing to say - but it's absolutely essential.

Repetition, in my experience, is key to confidence and getting patterns engrained and vocabulary known.

Can be boring, but gives them great sense of achievement and necessary 'ownership'.

Memorizing vocab is a necessary evil, I guess - and having good synthetic Latin to read at least makes this process easier as you naturally absorb words and met vocabulary in context. So reading - and, crucially, going over passages that you've read two or three times - is a good way to spend one's time, I think.

Students are not good at memory work today and it is challenging for them to find the time to do the necessary revision.

Exercises

It is highly desirable for students to do exercises on their own, both in preparation for going over them in class and also as written homework on which they get detailed feedback.

Grammar exercises need to be fun and have an instant pay off.

Preparation of in-course exercises (with instant feedback if done online) shifts a big part of the learning experience into student control and out of precious contact hours, but the VLE (Moodle) isn't a very attractive environment to spend lengths of time in, and the opportunity exists to treat it as a short cut to the answers.

Translating into Latin

Translating into Latin helps to focus the mind, and by using the language it helps with the memorising.

Translating sentences from English into Latin clearly indicates what they have and haven't understood.

Reading/Translating into English

Preparation of text - really great, but weaker ones can struggle with it on their own.

Variety and Sense of Progression

Strength comes in variety ... and activities where students can see themselves making progress.

Non-completion of Work

A major difficulty occurs when students do not prepare assigned tasks.

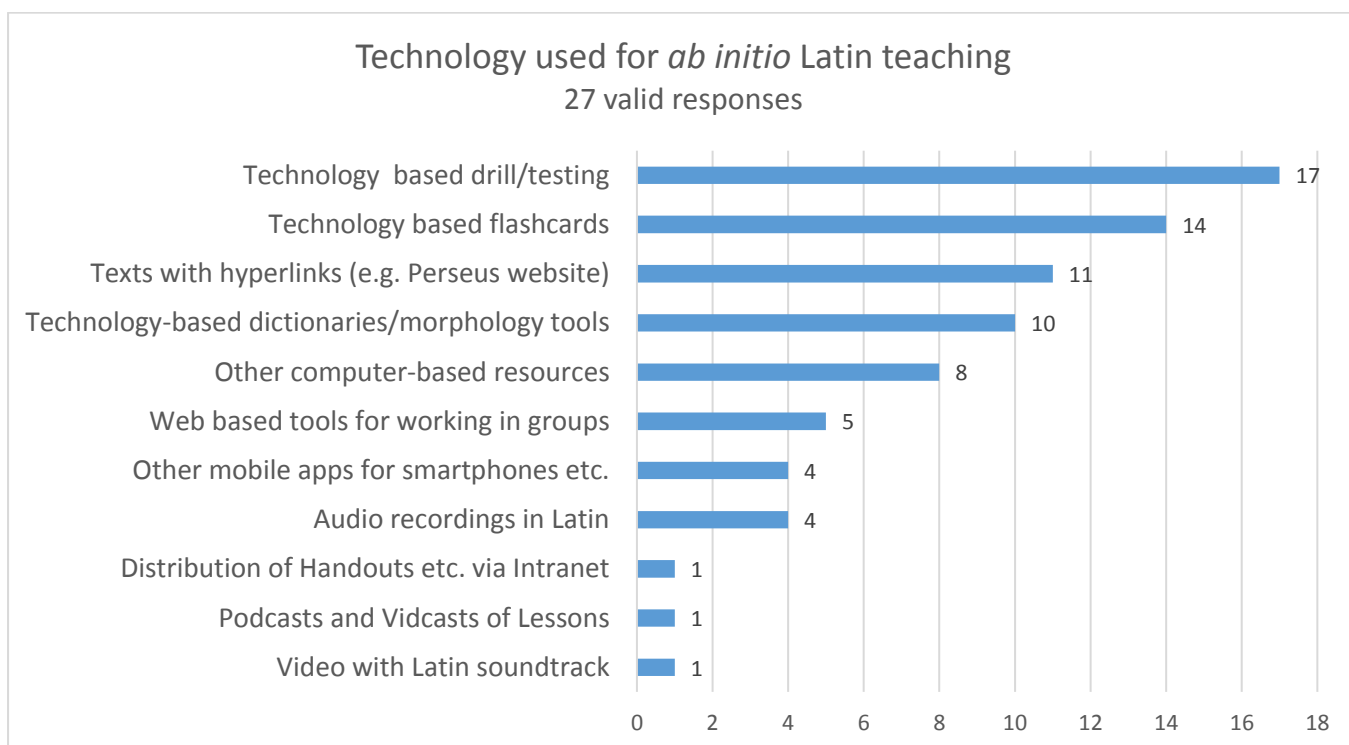
General

Constant reinforcement is crucial for progress.

Most [activity done outside class] needs to be reviewed individually which puts a lot of pressure on staff time. Where possible ... I use Moodle quizzes. Otherwise, I find marking takes a huge proportion of my time.

13. Technology

Q: Which of the following materials are used for *ab initio* Latin teaching (please list those you use personally and those you are aware of other colleagues in your university using)?



Q: Please describe the strengths and weaknesses (if any) of what you consider the most useful supplementary materials.

Applications and Interactive Sites for Vocabulary and Grammar Testing

Mobile apps for vocab and grammar drilling are v. useful.

Spaced-repetition flashcard apps make vocabulary learning a piece of piddle, especially if they can do it on their phones; BUT few students see the advantage when they can just waste months of their lives instead looking every single word up in a dictionary.

Our adjective/noun/verb tester is useful for repeatable practice on key grammar, but I'm aware that it's more of a testing tool than a learning tool.

The availability of quality software/apps is way behind that of modern languages ... There is a need for a Latin equivalent to the Eton College Greek testers - something I have investigated ... but have not been able to make much headway.

Self-marking exercises

Self-marking online versions of exercises give students immediate feedback 24/7, as well as allowing instructor to look virtually over their shoulder in VLEs and invisibly monitor progress, time spent, difficulties, and other big-brotherly surveillance; BUT are forced to rely on creaky VLEs that feed on the will to live.

They often expect a 'right' or 'wrong' answer and do not allow for freedom of expression. Therefore the exercises for which you can use them are limited.

Perseus

Most activities have to be recommended with a 'caveat' - Perseus does not always give the correct information.

We encourage the use of things like Perseus for the advanced students, rather than beginners.

Audio/Video recordings

Audio recordings are essential for students to get to grips with Latin by hearing the sounds and not just relying on sight as a learning tool (synaesthetic learning). Audio recordings can allow passivity, however.

One respondent saw the use of external sites as a decision for students to make, in line with their personal learning styles:

With a wide range of free online activities available, students are encouraged to be more independent and find their own personal approach.

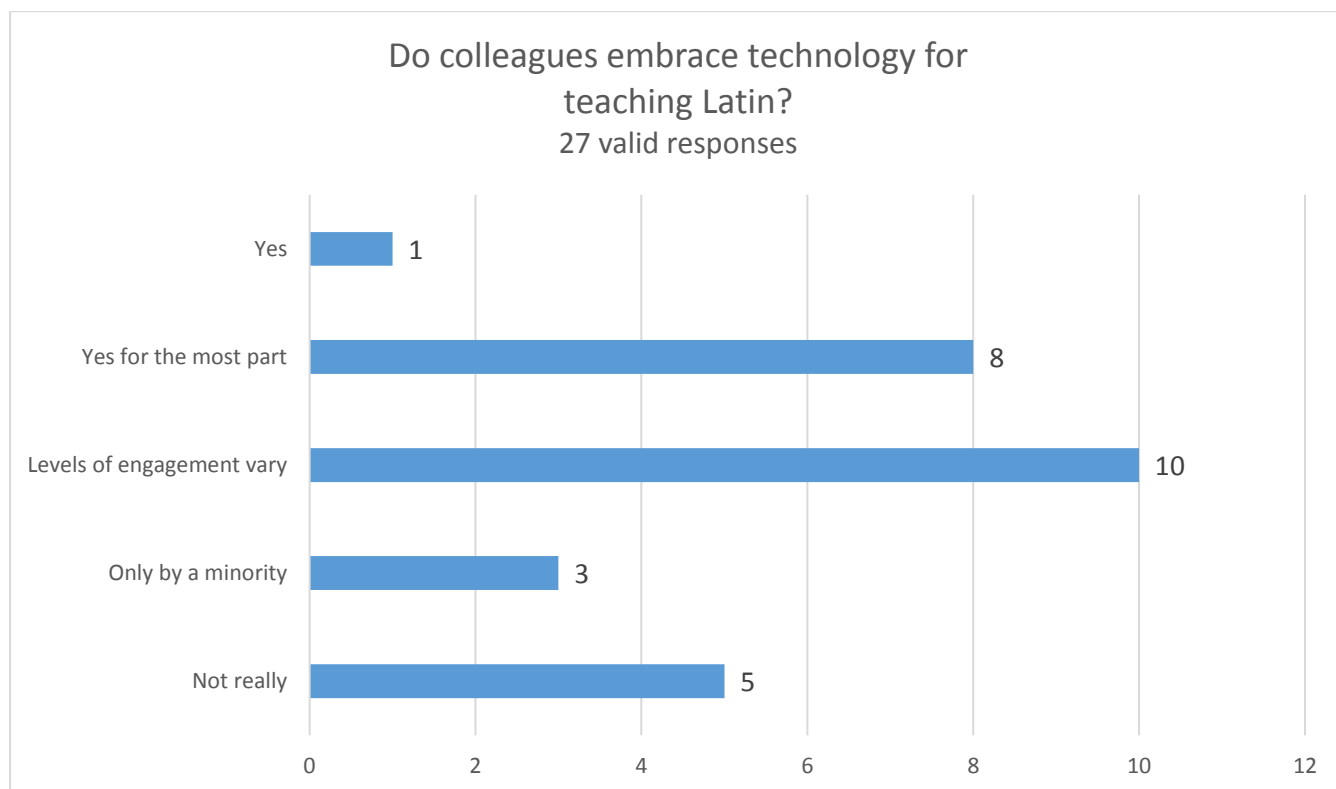
Another did not detect great enthusiasm from students for the use of interactive resources:

Students seem very reluctant to use computer-based material. This has been my experience over many years.

A further respondent was more upbeat:

Anything that helps reinforce what they are trying to learn is useful.

Q: Would you say that the use of technology for Latin teaching is actively embraced by colleagues within your Classics department or Classics-related subject area?



14. Innovation

Q: Are there materials or resources that you or your colleagues have developed specifically for ab initio students?

The following materials are listed in order of frequency of mention:

Interactive Online Resources

- Online drills which allow students to practise grammar and test themselves.
- Moodle Exercises and Quizzes
- Various online Latin word games

Handouts and Exercises

- When I don't like the order of topics in the textbook I teach them in a different order, meaning I cannot use the exercises in the book and must write my own.
- Several teachers have been teaching beginners' Latin for a long time and have developed a range of handouts, additional exercises etc. for use at this level.

- Numerous handouts explaining grammar; unseen passages adapted from ‘real’ texts
- Additional handouts, especially to ‘unpack’ all the condensed charts etc. in *Reading Latin*

Video and Audio Recordings

- Vidcasts and podcasts for distance students
- I have developed a lot of supplementary material for our in-house course and experimented a little with developing audio clips, and dabbled with a few video clips as well.

Entire Course Materials

- All course materials (except Kennedy and dictionary) are prepared in house.
- Entire course text ... and all supporting materials developed in-house

Other

- Vocabulary materials
- ‘Commentary’-style documents, trying to marry running vocabulary with notes, which are both very helpful grammatically (for preparation and understanding of the meaning of the text), but also stimulate literary awareness
- A long list of texts that the students read alongside *So you really want to learn Latin*

The Open University was notable in having produced free, open-access interactive materials, such as [Introducing Classical Latin](#).

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